

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 SIL-01 DIWY-01 CU-04 AID-05 OES-07
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R 201235Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9540

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KUWAIT 6563

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, KU
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: FINAL DRAFT OF KUWAIT COUNTRY
EVALUATION PLAN

REF: (A) STATE 273890, (B) STATE 133681, (C) STATE
138761, (D) KUWAIT 3556.

1. WE FOUND DEPARTMENT'S FINALDRAFT (REF A) TO BE WELL
CONCEIVED AND GENERALLY ACCURATE, AND WE APPRECIATE THAT
ACCOUNT WAS TAKEN OF OUR EARLIER COMMENTS ON THE FIRST
DRAFT (REF D). WE HAVE LISTED AND EXPLAINED BELOW A FEW
EDITORIAL AND FACTUAL MODIFICATIONS WHICH WE RECOMMEND BE
INCORPORATED INTO THE FINAL DRAFT. OUR COMMENTS ARE KEYED
TO THE NUMBERED PARAGRAPHS OF REF A:

2. PARA 2 (A) (1) (C): IN THE FINAL SENTENCE OF THIS
SUB-PARAGRAPH, DELETE "FROM IRAN, INDIA, AND PAKISTAN."
REASON: THE ROADBLOCKS ARE USED FOR IMMIGRATION AS WELL AS
CRIMINAL CHECKS ON ALL NON-KUWAITIS. THERE IS NO NEED TO
IDENTIFY IN THIS DRAFT ANY PARTICULAR GROUPS. MOREOVER,
MOST FOREIGN WORKERS ARE ARABS RATHER THAN SOUTH ASIANS.

3. PARA. 2(A) (2): IN THE FIRST SENTENCE OF THIS SUB-
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PARAGRAPH, DELETE THE WORD "RESIDENTS" AND REPLACE IT
WITH THE WORD "CITIZENS." REASON: IT IS THE LEGAL
CITIZENSHIP STATUS OF PERSONS IN KUWAIT WHICH DETERMINES
ENTITLEMENT TO GOVERNMENT BENEFITS.

4. PARA. 2(A) (2) A: CHANGE THE THIRD SENTENCE IN THIS
SUBPARAGRAPH TO READ: "NEWSPAPERS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO

CENSORSHIP PRIOR TO PUBLICATION, BUT THEY ARE SUBJECT TO SUSPENSION FOR VIOLATION OF LAWS REGARDING POLITICAL CONTENT, AND EDITORS CAN BE FIRED OR IMPRISONED UPON CONVICTION. (NONE HAVE BEEN.)" REASON: FACTUAL CLARITY.

5. PARA. 2(A)(2) B: CHANGE THE SECOND SENTENCE TO READ: "IN SEPTEMBER 1977, THE GOVERNMENT PROHIBITED PARTICIPATION BY NATIONAL SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS (GROUPS SUBSIDIZED OR AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNMENT) IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND LABOR." REASON: CLARITY REGARDING THE NATURE OF THE GROUPS TO WHICH THE PROHIBITION APPLIES.

6. PARA. 2 (A) (2) C: CHANGE THE FIRST SENTENCE TO READ: "BY AUGUST OF 1976, THE RULING FAMILY OF KUWAIT HAD GROWN INCREASINGLY APPREHENSIVE AS ARAB POLITICAL DIVISIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFLICTING LEBANON, THREATENED TO SURFACE IN THIS SMALL BUT VERY WEALTHY CITY-STATE." REASON FOR CHANGE: TO PINPOINT THE FACT THAT THE TROUBLE-CAUSING POTENTIAL IN KUWAIT OF A NUMBER OF FOREIGN ARAB DISPUTES (THE LEADING OF WHICH WAS IN LEBANON), RATHER THAN ANY ACTIVE SPLITS BETWEEN FACTIONS IN KUWAIT, WAS THE CAUSE OF GOK APPREHENSION AND SUBSEQUENT PRECAUTIONARY MOVES. ALSO CHANGE THE FOURTH SENTENCE TO READ: "THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT SOME ARAB GOVERNMENTS WERE PAYING FOR MEDIA ATTACKS ON OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS-- ALL TO THE GROWING EMBARRASSMENT OF THE KUWAITI LEADERSHIP." REASON FOR CHANGE: ARAB AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS OF VARIOUS IDEOLOGICAL STRIPES WERE USING THE KUWAITI PRESS, NOT ONLY ARAB RADICALS. ALSO CHANGE THE FIFTH SENTENCE TO READ: "KUWAITI RULERS APPARENTLY WERE CONCERNED THAT KUWAIT, A COUNTRY OF ONE MILLION WHERE 60 PERCENT ARE NON-KUWAITIS, MIGHT BECOME A LOCALE FOR INTRA-ARAB DISPUTES." REASON FOR CHANGE: WHILE THE POTENTIAL THREAT OF DIFFICULTIES IN "KEEPING ORDER" NO DOUBT OCCURRED TO KUWAITI LEADERS IN AUGUST 1976, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MEASURES THEN TAKEN WERE MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY WHAT WAS ONLY A POTENTIALITY. RATHER, THE INCREASED EMBARRASSMENT WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN CAUSED THE GOK BY INCREASED PUBLIC DEBATE (IN THE ASSEMBLY AND IN THE PRESS) OVER TOUCHY FOREIGN ARAB ISSUES (ON WHICH THE GOK CAREFULLY AVOIDS TAKING SIDES) APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE MAIN MOTIVE FOR SUCH MEASURES. ALSO CHANGE THE SEVENTH SENTENCE TO READ: "SOME NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES WERE SUSPENDED FOR PERIODS OF ONE TO THREE MONTHS, AND THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION BEGAN TO CENSOR PRESS RELEASES AND ADS ORIGINATING FROM FOREIGN

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MISSIONS AND GOVERNMENTS." REASON FOR CHANGE: THERE ARE NO GOVERNMENT CENSORS REVIEWING NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE COPY. HOWEVER, FOREIGN SOURCE MATERIAL (DESCRIBED ABOVE) MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR CLEARANCE TO THE MINISTRY BY THE FOREIGN SOURCE BEFORE IT IS GIVEN TO THE PRESS. ALSO CHANGE THE EIGHTH SENTENCE TO READ: "SEVERAL LABOR UNIONISTS WHO OBJECTED PUBLICLY TO THESE MOVES WERE DETAINED BRIEFLY (THOUGH CHARGES WERE NOT PRESSED), THE GOVERNMENT DISMISSED..." REASON FOR CHANGE: ACCURACY REGARDING THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE UNIONISTS.

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ACTION NEA-10

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COME-00 EB-08 SIL-01 DIWY-01 CU-04 AID-05 OES-07
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KUWAIT 6563

7. PARA. 2(A)(3) B: DELETE AS IRRELEVANT ALL OF THIS PARAGRAPH AFTER THE FIRST SENTENCE. REASON: THE BULK OF THE PARAGRAPH DEALS WITH GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION AND THE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST IT. THERE MAY BE LINKS IN GIVEN SOCIETIES BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION AND THE STANDARD OF LIVING AND/OR LEVEL OF POLITICAL REPRESSION. IN KUWAIT, HOWEVER, WHERE THE LIVING LEVELS ARE HIGH AND REPRESSION, IN THE USUAL SENSE OF THE WORD, HARDLY EXISTS, THERE APPEARS TO BE NO LINK BETWEEN CORRUPTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS. THUS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE BULK OF THE SUBPARAGRAPH TREATS SUBJECTS WHICH ARE AS REMOTE FROM HUMAN RIGHTS IN KUWAIT AS CORRUPTION WITHIN THE USG IS FROM HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE US.

8. PARA 2. (A)(4): CHANGE THE THIRD SENTENCE TO READ:
"THE GOVERNMENT JUSTIFIES OCCASIONAL RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM--SUCH AS PRESS RESTRICTIONS OR DETENTION OF TRAVELERS SUSPECTED OF BEING IN THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY-- ON THE GROUNDS..." REASON: THE WORD "RESTRICTIONS" REPLACES "CENSORSHIP," IN LINE WITH THE COMMENTS ON GOK

PRESS POLICY MADE IN PARAS. 4 AND 6 OF THIS MESSAGE.

9. PARA. 2(B)(1): CHANGE THE LAST SENTENCE IN THE
UNLETTERED SUBPARAGRAPH ON THE US-KUWAITI CULTURAL
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RELATIONSHIP TO READ: "US SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS
AT KUWAIT UNIVERSITY, FOR BUDDING KUWAITI THEATER, ART
AND CULTURAL GROUPS, FOR EXCHANGE SPEAKER PROGRAMS SHOULD
HAVE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE..." REASON: THE WORD "POSITIVE"
REPLACES THE PHRASE ". MOST POWERFUL" BECAUSE, WHILE
SIGNIFICANT, THESE US CULTURAL EFFORTS ARE FAR FROM THE
MOST POWERFUL INFLUENCES ON KUWAITI ATTITUDES ON HUMAN
RIGHTS. OTHER STRONGER FORCES BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE,
ARE AT WORK ON KUWAITI ATTITUDES IN THIS REGARD--THESE
INCLUDE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS THOUGHT, DESIRE FOR
ARAB UNITY, THE BRITISH HERITAGE OF DUE PROCESS, AND
CULTURAL TRAITS OF MILDNESS, COURTESY AND SLOW, MEASURED
COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING BY A RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE
SOCIETY. ALSO, CHANGE THE LAST SENTENCE OF PARA. 2(B)(1)
TO READ: "THE MATERIALS AND SERVICES, INCLUDING MILITARY
WHICH THE US SELLS THE KUWAITIS USUALLY CAN BE OBTAINED
ELSEWHERE. REASON: ACCURACY.

10. PARA. 2(B)(2): ADD THE FOLLOWING PHRASE TO THE
SECOND SENTENCE AFTER THE WORD KUWAIT: " EXCEPT AMONG
INTELLECTUALS WHO HAD MET AT THE NOW DEFUNCT ISTIQLAL
CLUB." REASON: GOK ABOLITION OF THIS LEADING POLITICAL
CLUB, A RESTRICTION ON FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY, WAS OF CONCERN
TO CLUB MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS.
SUTHERLAND

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION ONE BEING SERVICED----TO FOLLOW.

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